

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

MAY 18, 2010

Solar power generation facilities can reduce our dependence on foreign oil, minimize our region's air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and create new jobs to diversify our economy. Given abundant solar resources, availability of large tracts of land, a highly-educated educated workforce, as well as a need for new high-tech industries, the Antelope Valley is an ideal location for solar projects

Despite the benefits of solar projects, there are potential negative impacts that must be addressed. In this regard, the transmission lines that bring power from these facilities to sub-stations are a cause for concern. Constituents throughout my district are concerned about the environmental and aesthetic impacts of these transmission lines, particularly in terms of how they degrade views of the mountains and other scenic resources. I share this concern and believe that the County's policy should support underground transmission lines.

The Countywide General Plan and the County's Antelope Valley Area Plan are currently being updated. These long-range planning documents establish County policy on a variety of land development issues, and it would be appropriate for both documents to include a policy on the undergrounding of transmission lines.

While the Board of Supervisors has authority over some projects involving transmission lines, the California Public Utilities Commission has sole authority over many other projects. The Board of Supervisors and County staff, however, are able to provide comments on those CPUC-regulated projects, and a policy on the undergrounding of transmission lines in the Countywide General Plan and the County's Antelope Valley Area Plan would provide a basis for those comments.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Director of Planning to investigate the feasibility of a policy on the undergrounding of transmission lines in the Draft Countywide General Plan Update and the Draft Antelope Valley Area Plan Update, and to report back within 30 days.

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